



Media Release

Senator Mathias Cormann *Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Health Administration*

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MEDICARE LEVY SURCHARGE BILL DEFEATED IN SENATE

The Senate voted down the Government's proposed Medicare Levy Surcharge changes because it would have hurt the most vulnerable in the community, forcing up private health insurance premiums and blowing out public hospital waiting lists Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Health Administration Mathias Cormann said.

"The Senate tonight has voted down a bad public policy measure that would have had a disastrous impact on Australia's health system," Senator Cormann said.

"This measure was fundamentally flawed from the outset and none of the amendments circulated would have properly fixed up those fundamental flaws.

"At no time did the Government conduct a proper assessment of the impact of this measure on our health system.

"Somebody has to remind Nicola Roxon that she is the Minister for Health - not the Treasurer.

"The Minister for Health has a responsibility to ensure that the impact of budget measures like these on our health system is properly considered.

"Minister Roxon let public hospital patients and privately insured Australians down by not forcing Treasury to conduct proper modelling of the impact of this measure on public hospitals and private health insurance premiums.

"Increasing the Medicare Levy Surcharge thresholds would have seen hundreds of thousands of people drop private health cover, it would have pushed up the price of premiums, hurting older Australians in particular and put huge additional pressure on public hospitals that are already overburdened," Senator Cormann said.

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